

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OFA-01 IO-10 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

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P R 031025Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5378

INFO CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD EFIS IC GW CZ SP

SUBJECT: COMMERCE MINISTER STATES ICELAND'S CASE INTERNATIONALLY

1. MINCOMMERCE OLAFUR JOHANNESSEN RETURNED TO REYKJAVIK LAST WEEKEND FROM VISITS TO GENEVA (WHERE HE REPRESENTED ICELAND AT EFTA), TO PARIS (WHERE HE ATTENDED THE OECD MEETING) AND TO PRAGUE.

2. AT GENEVA, JOHANNESSEN EXPRESSED ICELAND'S CONCERN OVER INCREASING TRADE BARRIERS FOR ITS GOODS. HE DESCRIBED ICELAND'S DIFFICULTIES IN MAINTAINING FREE TRADE WITH THE EFTA AND EC COUNTRIES SINCE AGREED CONCESSIONS TO ICELAND IN THE LATTER

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ORGANIZATION HAVE NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED (AS A RESULT OF THE

FISHERIES LIMITS DISPUTE WITH THE WEST GERMANS). JOHANNESSON TOLD THE PRESS: "IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE GERMANS HAVE A COMPLETE VETO IN THE EC AND THEY PERSIST IN THESE MATTERS."

3. AT PARIS, JOHANNESSON TOOK PART IN THE OECD DISCUSSIONS AND HELD SIDE TALKS WITH SPANISH OFFICIALS ABOUT IMPORT PERMITS FOR ICELANDIC SALTFISH, A PROBLEM ICELAND HOPES TO SEE RESOLVED IN ITS FAVOR. PRAGUE VISIT WAS AT INVITATION OF HIS CZECH COUNTER-PART AND PRIMARY PURPOSE WAS ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE CZECHS TO BUY MORE ICELANDIC FISH.

4. SECGEN OF COMMERCE MINISTRY SAID THAT IN ICELAND'S VIEW, EFTA MEETING WAS FOREGONE FAILURE SINCE EFTA COUNTRIES HAVE NO INFLUENCE WITH EC. HE SAID PRESS CLAIMS THAT MINISTER HAD THREATENED THAT ICELAND MIGHT LEAVE EFTA AND DENOUNCE AGREEMENT WITH EC WERE EXAGGERATED AND MINISTER HAD MADE NO SUCH THREATS. SECGEN DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT ICELAND IS FINDING IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN TARIFF CONCESSIONS TO EC COUNTRIES "WHEN IT GETS NOTHING IN RETURN." SECGEN CONFIRMED THAT PRAGUE VISIT WAS ROUTINE AND THAT CZECHS AGREED TO RAISE FISH PURCHASES TO 3000 TONS THIS YEAR COMPARED WITH 1700 TONS IN 1974. OTHER SOURCES INFORMED EMBASSY THAT MINISTER RENEWED OECD FREE TRADE PLEDGE FOR ICELAND AND TOOK PART IN OECD LOAN FUND MEETING.
IRVING

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